Pakistan's link with North Korea

3022. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan's links with North Korea in the matter of nuclear weapons have been established;

(b) what steps have been taken by the other countries to see that they do not pose any threat to India's security; and

(c) the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Government has seen reports about Pakistan having helped the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in latter's nuclear weapons programme in exchange for ballistic missile technology.

(b) and (c) U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell stated in an interview that the had conveyed the US concerns about North Korea's nuclear programme to General Parvez Musharraf. He stated that "President Musharraf gave me his assurance, as he has previously, that Pakistan is not doing anything of the nature." As regards past cooperation, Mr. Powell stated "I don't want to get into the past and sources and methods because there obviously were nations who were helping North Korea as they acquired the technology." In a recent development, the US State Department on March 24, 2003 imposed sanctions on the A.Q. Khan Research Laboratories of Pakistan and Changgwang Sinyong Corporation of DPRK under the US law for missile-related transfers. It is been India's assessment that Pakistani nuclear weapons and missile development thrive on clandestine transfers and linkages. The US sanctions fall in line with this assessment.

Indian Fishermen captured by Pakistan

3023. SHRI C.P.THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that 32 Indian Fishermen with their seven boats were captured by Pakistan Authorities in the month of March, 2003; and